

WANDERINGS IN GOD'S VINEYARD

Despite the promises I often made to myself, and have at times repeated to others, I find that it has been some time since I have written for the columns of our paper. Guess I have been doing like others:—waiting to hear from the more experienced workers and writers, being forgetful of the fact that I also owe a duty to the paper which is not altogether satisfied by my mere reading it. I can and do see more and more, that if we hope for success to crown our interests, we must make a strong pull, a long pull, and a pull together. I saw a very suggestive picture in a recent issue of the "Ram's Horn" in which a minister of the Gospel was carrying a church,—building and all, on his shoulder, and seemed nearly crushed under the load. A goodly number of spectators were standing by (no doubt some of his brethren), offering suggestions, but not moving a step, nor offering to assist in carry the burden, I thought of the great truth shown by the picture: of the devoted servants of God, preachers of his word, many of whom were represented by the tired, toilworn man in the scene. Of the ministers who are bearing the burdens, and too often bearing them almost alone. All are interested, so they say, in the great work, but when their effort belies their profession of interest, their attitude needs no comment. What may be said of the foregoing, may also be said of all interests of the church at large. One man cannot conduct a church paper successfully, he needs our help; mine and yours too.

If I have been silent, my silence is not to be taken as an evidence of my having been idle. A great work is to be done in the Miami Valley, and I am one of the labors in the vineyard, and have been about my Master's business—the extension of his His kingdom, and the salvation of souls, I am happy to announce that the effort has not been altogether fruitless either. With the help of Bro. J. M. Rittgers of Indiana, there have been 47 additions to the charge in which I labor, since Feb. 1, 1893. I feel to thank God and take courage, when I see good accomplished. And so I am encouraged in my new field of labor, and with the eye of faith in God and His promises, I look forward to seasons of greater rejoicing.

West Alexandria has had another season of revival work, led again by Brother Rittgers who closed a three weeks meeting on Thanksgiving evening with two additions.

Farmersville, led by the pastor, had one of the grandest meetings it has ever been my privilege to attend. The deep interest that characterized the entire service, still exists, and souls are near the kingdom, and will yet come into it.

Winchester will begin with the new year, to unfurl the banner anew, and we are praying and hoping for great good. No revival has been held here for a number of years, and there is certainly a large harvest to be gathered. Many are outside of the fold the many for whom Christ died that they

might be saved. "Let us therefore pray for one another" that each may be qualified for his part in the sowing and the reaping.

On the last day of November, in answer to earnest calls, I went to Prattville, Mich., the scene of many a conflict I have had with the enemy of souls. For two years I have labored for and among the people there, as God gave me grace, and was glad for the opportunity afforded me to briefly renew old associations, and once more preach the Gospel of the Son of God there. Immense congregations greeted me despite the very stormy weather. How much I love these people God knows, and how much I deplore the Judaizing work that has been done there since I left. A band of Advents have taught the necessity of keeping the Jewish ritual, and have sown discord in the ranks of the church. Paul's letter to the Galatians is much more easily understood after having such an experience as the Prattville Brethren have had.

In the Silver Creek congregation I also made a brief stop. Long enough, however, to officiate at the wedding of Sister Ida Yagel, and Mr. Stambaugh. Of course this was all very pleasant, especially the dinner which was served immediately after the ceremony. In the family of Bro. Yagel, I have long felt perfectly at home. Bro. Y. and his daughter Ida, having both received Christian baptism at my hands. In this congregation, I found the guiding hand of its elder, absent. Bro. Rittenhouse having accepted a call from the brethren in Norton Co., Kansas. The prayers of all of his people follow him to his new work. Bro. R. has been the mainstay of the church in northern Ohio since its organization, so far as human support is concerned. In his absence, the spiritual necessities of the Silver Creek Brethren are attended to by Bro. Adam Eberly, of whose efforts the people speak very highly. I am glad to know this, since Bro. E. has for several years thought seriously of entering the ministry. May this responsibility lead to that end, is my wish.

At Bryan, I found the Brethren laboring on in the work. Though they have had no regular pastor since my leaving them last March. They have persevered. Sunday-School and prayer meetings have been kept up, and better still, a new church has been built, and is nearly ready for dedication. This is one of the congregations that does not look to its preacher to carry the church. Its members are of the working kind, and success crowns patient and persevering effort. The Ladies Aid Society, numbering less than a dozen members, led by the devoted sister, aunt Lydia Keiser, have purchased the lot for the church building, paying \$450. for the same. God will bless the noble band of workers at Bryan.

And now the trip is done, and break the Bread of Life at home again! Baptized one young man at W. Alexandria last Saturday; preached three times on Sunday, and await next Lord's day to repeat the effort.

Your Bro. in the Lord,
MARTIN SHIVELY.
Gratis, Ohio, Dec. 18, 1893.

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